

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—*Corper.*



OLD FAMILY PORTRAITS.

THE FORGED WILL.

CHAPTER IV.

A FEW words are needful concerning Sir Valary and his daughter. Sir Valary, known to be as proud as any who had ever borne his name, lived a life of extraordinary seclusion and self-denial. For many years he had banished from his home every sound of mirth, every vestige of social comfort. His servants, who had, at the death of Lady De la Mark, been greatly reduced in number, had gradually become fewer, until every female office was represented by Mrs. Gillies, an old and greatly attached

domestic, while Shadrach Higgs, with his boy Robinson, whom he had pressed into the service, held the same comprehensive post in the other sex.

What had caused so great a change—for at one time Parker's Dew, or Castle De la Mark, as it was called, was noted for its courtly splendour and unbounded hospitality—no one knew. Some attributed it to the early death of Lady De la Mark; others, to the influence of Bloodworth. Squire Brimble, who seldom allowed himself to speak of his brother, when he did give an opinion, said, "It's the love of money—that's enough to account for anything."

The growing infirmities of Sir Valary had kept him long a prisoner in his chamber, at the door of which now, as described by Mrs. Gillies, sat his daughter Marjory. There was nothing heroine-like in her appearance. Low in stature and plain in feature, she owed all attraction to the force of her character, and the peculiarity of her early training. Indomitable courage shone in her dark eyes, and patience, the result of a deeply-exercised spirit, gave a sweet calm to her face. Her dress was, from necessity, somewhat singular. For a long period she had been limited to her mother's wardrobe, and, careless of the fashion in which the garments were made, she wore them without change, as her mother had left them.

"He sleeps so long!" said Marjory, her pale face resting against the chamber-door.

"I've known him sleep longer, miss," said Mrs. Gillies, peering up the spiral staircase. "If you'd just please to taste these fresh cakes, that Shady has brought in, and the chocolate, that's drying up from standing these hours, I should be thankful;" and she displayed the cakes, the choice of which had exercised greatly Shady's discriminating powers. Marjory prevailed on, left her to watch. "You know, miss," said the faithful creature, "if you take ill, we have no power to keep off that man when he comes; and one way we're all alike, for the highest can't do without eating and drinking, no more than the lowest." Marjory did not at all, at that moment, feel exalted above the conditions of humanity. Bloodworth's behaviour had convinced her that he possessed some secret militating against her father's honour, and that this was the source of the power he exercised over him.

The loneliness in which she had been reared had made her very self-reliant. She had borne much personal inconvenience in silence; and if it had been only for herself that she had now to suffer or to do, she would not have been slow in her plan of acting; but it seemed necessary that some one, more equal than she was to cope with the steward, should step in between him and her father, for whose very life she trembled, if such excitement as he had that day suffered should be renewed. Yet, if her suspicions were correct, how could she, without treading on dangerous ground, take any one into her counsels? and, indeed, who was there to whom she could refer? To her uncle, her natural protector after her father, she had been a stranger for many years; and she had grown from childhood to womanhood with no other companion than her father. One there was, indeed, and to him she inclined to open her heart, and that one was Dr. Cruden—the high-minded and skillful physician, who was the sole visitor of gentle blood at Parker's Dew.

Filled with painful conflict, she resumed her seat at the chamber-door. A slight noise was gratefully heard by her, and entering, she found the long sleep had produced its usual effect of refreshing calm. Sir Valary smiled gently on her, and, as if forgetful of the distressing occurrences of the morning, received with pleased readiness all her tender endeavours to restore and amuse him; and thus passed the evening peacefully away.

Several days followed in the same calm. Sir Valary and his daughter seemed with equal care to avoid the name of Bloodworth, and both were secretly thankful when the evening closed, without his presence having embittered the day.

One morning, Marjory, receiving Shady's promise not to go beyond earshot of her father, prepared for one of those long rambles in the surrounding woods, which never failed to procure for her rest and relaxation of mind. Her book learning was small. In the great book

of nature, that lay before her, she was an ardent student. Shady, who fondly considered himself, in some sort, her preceptor, had endeavoured to inspire her with a love of heraldry, and was never tired of expatiating on the endless genealogies connected with the tree of De la Mark. But though she loved to wander among the portraits of her ancient house, dimly lighted up by the few sunbeams that could struggle through a loosened shutter here and there, her thoughts were wholly given to those people of the past, that looked grimly from the wall, while he was trying to explore and expound their heraldic bearings. She knew most of the faces by heart; but her head was little encumbered with the technicalities of which he was so proud. Shady had plodded through the elements of botany, that he might usker her also into it. She soon learned with avidity all he could teach her, and, unaided by other help than her own affection for the pursuit, became well accomplished in it. But we must follow her in her walk.

Her mind had been too much exercised of late to allow her to give thought to anything but one reigning subject. Her case for wild flowers remained unused, as she passed musingly through the tangled wood. When at a little distance from the house, she was arrested once or twice by sounds of rustling amongst the branches. The once carefully-arranged paths were now so ill kept that they were in some parts difficult to penetrate. No stranger ever intruded there. She supposed it to be some woodman gathering brushwood, and passed carelessly on; but coming suddenly on a cleared space, from which, through an opening in the trees, appeared a fine and extensive view of the country around, she saw whence the sounds had proceeded.

The reader does not need a second description—it was the strange lodger from Stoney Gates. He was apparently surveying the scene with artistic purpose—his implements lying on the turf—and he was arranging a piece of broken timber to form a seat of convenient height and situation.

The meeting was one of mutual and equal surprise. Each surveyed the other steadily, and in silence; but the stranger, soon recovering himself, lifted his cap with courtly propriety, for he needed nothing to tell him he was in company with gentle blood. Marjory returned the salutation, and was passing onward; but a sense of inhospitality detained her—she lingered, and said hesitatingly, "You are a draughtsman?" He bowed. "You are going to put down some of our scenery?" Again he assented. "Would you not like to have the Castle De la Mark in your foreground, with this fine country behind?"

"I have been trying to get that," he replied; "but the house is so surrounded, I can find no favourable standing-ground."

"I will lead you to one," she said; and, making her way with easy rapidity through the thicket, she emerged on a spot favourable in every way to the accomplishment of the design. The graceful dexterity with which she overcame all the obstacles of the labyrinth struck him with admiration. "She is worthy of an American forest," he thought.

When they stood face to face upon the spot sought for, a slight exclamation of surprise burst from the stranger, which was answered with a smile of satisfaction from Marjory. There was pride in her heart, and triumph in her eye, as she turned exultingly to the scene before them, upon which they both gazed silently. Suddenly she asked, "Who could put this down?" and looked at him for an answer; but his eyes were fixed, not on the landscape—they were busily and intently studying

her face. He withdrew them in some little confusion, and, the blood of De la Mark crimsoning her cheek, warned him that to win patronage, he must woo it discreetly. He thanked her, in most deferential terms, for having given him the opportunity of trying, but agreed that the subject was one to mock art. His voice and bearing were so remote from intrusion or unbecoming forwardness, that Marjory was willing to believe the look that had offended her was one of natural and excusable curiosity. She allowed him, therefore, to make one or two remarks on various points around before she left him.

As she was turning away, the stranger, still uncovered, said, "I have had the honour of speaking to Miss De la Mark?" She looked assent, and they parted, he to pursue his task, and she to wonder who, among the few persons whose faces were familiar to her, continually floated in her memory while she was in company with the stranger.

In this short interview, in which so little had been said, a great advance had been made by each in the favour of the other. The fire of her eye and the freedom of her step, her genuine dignity and self-respect, untinted by affectation, all betokened a character which had great charms for the stranger, while his sympathy with her, so evident in those slight indications of look and bearing which are to be felt but not described, had won upon her strangely; so that in truth they were both far more intimate from this few minutes in the wilderness than months of drawing-room proprieties would ever have made them. What a sudden check he had given to the current of her thoughts! all that had so deeply interested her fell aside, and, by some inexplicable intention, he took its place.

Again the crashing of the distant boughs as she wandered homeward, struck her ear, and it was with somewhat of disappointment that, after a minute or two of watching and waiting, she saw the faithful Shady struggling through the thicket to reach her.

"If his young lady would only condescend to walk in the paths where the trees did not meet right over, trusting she would pardon him for saying so, it would be far less perilous for limbs and their coverings to pursue her." Indeed he made a rueful figure; for although he had guarded his dress, by turning it up or turning it down, as circumstances recommended the precaution, he had met with sundry tears and scratches, as though he had been at war with all the underwood he had encountered. Marjory smiled at his expostulations and his appearance, but, suddenly remembering his promise, inquired why he had left her father.

Shady assured her that Dr. Cruden was with Sir Valary, and would remain till his return, for he wished to see Miss De la Mark, and had sent him in pursuit of her.

"Then," said Marjory, "Mr. Higgs, there is a stranger in the wood; he is drawing on my favourite seat—drawing the place, you see; and I wish—I should like you—to—just to say—if he would wish to draw any of the interior you can lead him through it."

Shady stared. "I invite a stranger to the Dues, Madam!" he said slowly.

"No, no," said Marjory emphatically; "of course he will not be intruded on my father nor on me; he greatly admires the place, and it seems unkind not to allow him to enjoy the pleasure fully. It is little we do in hospitality, Mr. Higgs: we may at least show this poor favour to strangers; and this is no ordinary person, but a man of birth and high taste, as you will see, I am sure. An appeal on the score of hospitality could not be made to a

more ready ear than that of Shadrach Higgs. How had he mourned in time past over the silent halls and untrodden doorways of Parker's Dew, when his large heart would have welcomed the whole world! But time and use had reconciled him to all; and now to introduce a visitor seemed as strange a work to him as it had once been to exclude one.

While he was gathering up his thoughts to make a suitable, respectful protest against the imprudence of doing what, if Sir Valary heard of it, might give him umbrage, Marjory had vanished. Shady looked after her disconsolately. Not having been able to resign his commission, he felt it imperative on him to fulfil it, and with troublous cogitations on the matter, and earnest hopes that the stranger would not fall in with the invitation, he scrambled on towards the place. While he was engaged in his contest with the bushes, he thought only of how best to escape them; but when he stood in the presence of the stranger, whom he immediately recognised, a feeling of vexation that he should appear in a style so inconsistent with the dignity of "De la Mark" mingled with it.

On seeing him, the stranger, who seemed to have been of Marjory's mind, and had thrown aside his sketch as unsuccessful, accosted him as an old friend. "What! the librarian! I am fortunate indeed! Are you seeking your lady? She was here, but left a little ago."

Shady, in as collected and proper a form as he could get up for the occasion, told him that he had met his young lady, and delivered her invitation.

The stranger started up at once. "We will lose no time, Mr. Higgs: nothing would give me greater delight;" and immediately he began, in a manner which Shady well remembered, a series of questions as to every part of the dwelling, the order in which it was kept, and so on. While he endeavoured to answer these becomingly, an under-current of thought occupied Shady. Various schemes he devised and rejected for keeping the stranger out of sight and hearing of any of the household, without allowing him to discover that he was there by stealth. Under other circumstances he could have discoursed with delight on the wonders and glories of Parker's Dew, to him an untiring subject. Then again, the incongruities of ancient grandeur and present meanness forced themselves upon him, and an uneasy consciousness arose, of the effect they would have in diminishing the stranger's reverence for the noble house in whose honour his heart was bound up.

"Why, it is in ruins!" exclaimed the stranger, coming abruptly on one side of the quadrangle.

"That portion is," said Shady; "the exact reason I cannot tell, but there is a tradition——"

"It has been in decay for many years," said the stranger, not waiting for the tradition; "this, I presume, is the chapel?"

"It is;" and now did Shady, with all the formality of a grave court official, introduce him respectively to the armoury, the picture gallery, and the library; that is to say, he pointed to their positions.

The stranger surveyed all with the deepest interest. "Did I understand," said he, "that I was to be allowed to see the interior of these places?"

"The library," said Shady, "being my particular department, I carry the key of the side entrance; the other keys are in Sir Valary's room, but I can readily obtain them. There is no worthier part of the building, in my humble estimation, than this," he said, placing the small key in the lock of a low door, to enter which they were obliged to stoop.

"Where are we?—in a tomb?" said the stranger.

"No," said Shady, "though indeed we are among the dead; wait, if you please, till I kindle the lantern."

SAILORS' HOMES.

Few people who have paid any attention to the history and circumstances of the British sailor, can have failed to be struck by the dreary contrast existing between the estimation in which he is held by the nation at large, and the treatment he receives from the individuals with whom he comes in contact as soon as he sets foot on shore. Jack is the pride and boast of his countrymen, the bulwark of our national liberties, who hurls our avenging thunder upon the foe, and the support and medium of our commerce: at least, he is all that, so long as he is afloat on his own element, perilling his life against the tempest or the enemy; and we are never unwilling to do him justice, or to acknowledge the obligations we are under to him. But no sooner does Jack set foot on land, than he undergoes a sudden change; he is no longer something to be admired and applauded, but something to be robbed and plundered; from a hero and bold adventurer he is suddenly transformed into a property; and he no sooner feels the firm soil under his foot, than he finds himself in the grasp of the land-shark and the crimp, who are greedy to devour him, and make very short work indeed of the process. This has been the case almost from time immemorial, and examples of the infamous treatment which the sailor has received at the hands of these harpies are only equalled in their turpitude by their astounding numbers and constant recurrence, which are ever exciting the public indignation and sympathy.

Hundreds of large fortunes have been made by the scoundrel speculators upon the improvidence and simplicity of the sailor. A curious and characteristic illustration of the manner in which such villanous gains were made, came accidentally to our knowledge the other day, while overhauling the papers of a long defunct Ports-mouth agent. This man, after commencing as a common lodging-house keeper, close to the Hard, had died worth £50,000; and his own memoranda pretty clearly established the fact, that at the breaking out of the war, after the short peace that followed the treaty of Amiens, he had bought of a Clerkenwell dealer two bushels of worn-out and discarded watch movements, had contracted for putting them in going order, and in double-gilt pinchback cases, and had cleared, within a few years, several thousand pounds by selling them to sailors as "gold chronometers."

It was, doubtless, Jack's ignorance of life, and of the ways of the world, which made him, and still makes him, the victim of the world's knaves. But we need hardly wonder at this ignorance, when we reflect upon the routine of a seaman's existence. He lives in a world totally distinct from the world on shore; he sees nothing of the craft and cunning of trade; he reads no newspapers; he knows nothing of the struggle for social position, in which all other men are engaged; he has the instinct of obedience and discipline constantly controlling him; and while all the education of his faculties, which circumstances of danger daily afford him, has a tendency to furnish him with resources which a landsman would never dream of in cases of deadly emergency and present peril, he is correspondingly improvident of the future, and reckless of what to-morrow may bring forth.

The crimps and Jew-sharks who infest all the ports of the kingdom, are perfectly aware of Jack's character, and, what is more to the purpose, they are aware also of his failings and of the peculiar temptations by which he is

most readily ensnared and subdued, and they make their preparations accordingly. In fact, the proceedings of a crimp with a sailor are as well known as those of a spider with a blue-bottle, to which they have been not inaptly compared; in both cases the victim is sucked dry and then abandoned, in favour of fresh prey. Once in the grasp of the crimp, the sailor is carried off to his den; here he is induced to give up his money, "to be taken care of for him," the custodian always taking very good care that Jack never sees a farthing of it again. If it is a round sum, the thoughtless fellow may dream away a month or two in the company of riotous companions; but, be it much or little, it will be all swallowed up by the crimp, who some fine morning hands his victim an account, showing that he has spent all his money, and that there is further a balance against him of something more than a trifle: for this balance, the prudent host attacks Jack's chest and outfit, and then turns him adrift. The account is so much Greek to the sailor, who for half the time, perhaps, has not been in a condition to know what he has been doing, and who would be ashamed to have the hideous items discussed in a court of justice, even if there were any hope of redress from the law, which there is not; so forth walks poor Jack, stripped of everything and reduced to beg in the streets, though a month or two ago he was master of some thirty pounds, perhaps.

Such is the history, not of one case, nor of a hundred, nor a thousand, but of tens of thousands of cases, whose dismal unrecorded catastrophes have been accumulating for centuries. Long familiarity with these atrocities, which may be seriously characterized as infernal, has hardened us to the perception of their infamy, so that the public has been used to regard them as a matter of mirth. They were laughed at a hundred years ago, by Smollet and Fielding, and their tragic incidents have furnished capital for comic writers down to our own day. It was well for the interests of humanity, and especially was it well for the sailor, that at length some noble-minded men were found, who saw no laughing matter in the business. It was to two such men—Captain G. C. Gambier, R.N., and Captain R. J. Elliot, R.N.*—that England and the world are indebted for the establishment of Sailors' Homes, which have done more towards rescuing the seaman from the clutches of the crimp, than could have been possibly accomplished by any other means, and which promise ultimately to effect his entire emancipation.

It was in the year 1827 that Captains Gambier and Elliot, compassionating the wretched condition of the sailors whom the crimps had cast forth—many of whom, plundered of everything, were found huddled together in poverty and misery—came to the determination of establishing an asylum for their relief. Their first idea was a Destitute Sailors' Asylum; but they soon saw that the destitution might be prevented in great measure, if the sailor were provided with some decent quarters to which he might resort when in port, where his hard-earned money would be taken care of for him, and where the crimps could not get at him. They therefore resolved to establish a Home for the solvent sailor, as well as an Asylum for the destitute.

At this crisis the Brunswick Theatre fell to the ground, on the day that it was to have been opened. The situation of this building, close to the London Docks, presented the very site for which Captains Gambier and Elliot were in search. They clubbed their money, and, with the

* To these honoured names may be added that of Lieut. R. Justice, who was one of the early founders and supporters of the cause.

assistance of a few friends, bought the ground and the wrecks of the fallen theatre, and, solemnly invoking the blessing of God upon their undertaking, prepared to commence their work. The first stone of the Sailors' Home was laid on the 10th of June, 1830. There was much opposition by those interested in maintaining the then existing state of things, and there were many interruptions to the work; but it went steadily on, and on the 1st of May, 1835, the Home was opened for the reception of one hundred men. The Destitute Sailors' Asylum, which stands but a few paces from the Home, arose almost simultaneously with it, and both have been of priceless value to the sailor ever since. The Home has been enlarged from time to time, as funds could be procured, and at the present moment offers comfortable accommodation to upwards of three hundred boarders.

The exertions of Captain Elliot in this noble cause are beyond all praise. "From the first moment in which he stood among the ruins of the Brunswick Theatre, till it pleased God to deprive him of bodily and mental energy, did that self-denying Christian man devote all his powers, his talents, his influence, and his money, to this, his darling object, of protecting and providing for the comfort of sailors. Connected with a noble family, and entitled by birth, education, and station, to all the advantages which the most exalted society could give him, he willingly relinquished all, took up his abode in a humble lodging, surrounded by gin-shops, near the Home: denied himself most of the comforts, it may almost be said some of the necessities, of life, in order the more effectually to carry out his benevolent design; and for eighteen years of self-denial and devotion, he made it the business of his life to superintend the Institution."

Some idea of the advantages which sailors have derived from the Home may be gathered from the following facts and figures, which form a part of the statistics of the establishment. From the date of its opening, up to April of last year, 121,441 seamen have been received, nearly 100,000 being British or Irish, and the remainder, foreigners of all nations: of the whole, over 35,000 were returned boarders. Within the last year, 8617 have been received, and of these, 2738 were returned boarders. The total amount of sailors' money received in the Home, from its opening up to April, 1861, was £976,165, of which £347,450 was remitted home. The amount received in the last year was £65,296, of which £26,551 was remitted home. These figures have a most suggestive significance, as they point to an incalculable amount of fraud, of vice, and of misery, which has been avoided by the prudent appropriation of large sums of money; but in fact they do but feebly represent the blessings to the sailor of which the Home has been the medium. Under its hospitable roof Jack finds not merely food, shelter, and comfort, at a price which he can afford to pay, but firm friends, good advisers, active business agents, and that warm sympathy and interest which no price could purchase. He has the benefit of daily religious services; he has the use of a good library, the means of amusement and relaxation, and he can have, if he choose, the advantage of studying his profession under well-qualified masters, there being a school daily open in the institution, where the science of navigation is taught with special regard to its fundamental principles, and where the necessary books, charts, and instruments are provided for his use.

Let us now enter the Well Street Home, and look around us. Passing through the entrance, and leaving the secretary's and accountants' offices on either hand, we find ourselves in a large hall, amid a concourse of seamen scattered in groups, or leisurely promenading

about. The shipping office and the discharging office are accessible from this hall: in the former, ship-owners and masters engage their crews, and here the men sign the ship's articles and receive allotment notes entitling their families to a part of their wages during their absence; and in the latter, the crews, on their return from voyages, receive their wages in the presence of a shipping-master, who sees that they are fairly treated. Adjoining is the cashier's office, where all money transactions between the boarders and the Home are carried on; every man who enters has a separate account with this office, which, while it affords him every facility in despatching his business, encourages him to deposit a portion of his earnings in the Seamen's Savings Bank.

Ascending a broad flight of stairs from the hall, we are in a spacious dining-room, lofty and well-ventilated, with accommodation for dining 300 men, without the inconvenience of crowding. It is long past the dinner-hour, but there is a good sprinkling of tars on the various benches round the blazing fires, or amusing themselves with draughts at the tables. The room is ornamented with the model of a frigate, and with a bust of Captain Elliot; it is hung with maps and charts, and is further supplied with books in various languages. From a door in the dining-room we pass into the reading-room, where those disposed for quiet study have the use of a line-of-battle ship's library of 250 volumes, with some very important additions from public societies and friends of the institution. The mass of the books have been exceedingly well thumbed, and some of them, being of the class calculated to gratify Jack's well-known predilection for a "tough yarn," have been done into irredeemable dogs' ears by his rather rough handling. The religious books are, perhaps, of a class less attractive than might be selected—at any rate, they appear to be the least used. The bibles and prayer-books are in all languages, and we find them in numbers in the dining-hall as well as the reading-room.

Ascending to the second floor we are in one of the dormitories. These, which are fitted up on an admirable plan, securing thorough ventilation, are divided into a number of berths or bed-cabins, in two tiers, the upper tier being reached by a staircase and gallery extending the whole length of the apartment. The berths, through the whole of which the air circulates freely at the top, are about eight feet by five, and seven feet high. Each is provided with a bed for a single sleeper, a chair, a bible, and a lavatory with the water laid on. There are ten dormitories in the building, one of which was fitted up at the expense of Queen Adelaide, and the number of berths or sleeping cabins is in all 328. A noticeable feature in the dormitories is the thorough cleanliness that prevails, though indeed the same remark is applicable to the other parts of the building.

From the dormitories we descend to the basement floor, where, on entering the ample kitchen, we find the remnants of dinner all just cleared off, and huge stacks of bread and butter piling up in preparation for tea. On this floor, besides the usual conveniences of so large a household, there is a hot and cold bath, two large store-rooms for the safe keeping of the property of absent seamen, and there is, besides, that favourite resort of Jack in his recreative moods, "a good dry skittle ground"—*dry*, be it observed, in a double sense, inasmuch as the hard muscular sport is not allowed to be lubricated with grog.

Before quitting the region of the kitchen, we may as well advert to the dietary of the Home, and see what are the creature comforts which the sailor gets in return for the two shillings a-day, or, in the case of apprentices,

twelve shillings a-week, which he is called upon to pay. In the morning at eight breakfast is ready, and that consists of boiled beef and fish, with bread, butter, and coffee. At one, dinner is on the table, when the fare is soup, beef and mutton roast and boiled, meat pies, vegetables, puddings three times a-week, and table ale. At half-past five tea is ready, with which salads, as an anti-scorbutic, are served throughout the year. Supper, of bread and cheese and ale, is ready from nine to ten at night. Further, there is nothing like rigour observed as to the meals, since, if a man's business detains him from dinner or tea at the regular time, he can procure it in another room at a later hour. In addition to this liberal dietary, the boarder also gets his washing done free of charge—to the extent, that is, of three shirts a-week, and other things in proportion. It must be obvious, we think, that the advantages of the compact are, as they should be, all on the side of the sailor. All that is expected of him in return, is that decent propriety of conduct which is quite as much due to his own self-respect as it is to the Home of which he is a member. He is forbidden to swear, because it is "unbecoming to the character of a man," as well as dishonouring to God. He cannot remain if he be given to intoxication—that is not to be thought of. He must not brawl or quarrel with his comrades, lest the peace of the Home be disturbed; and he must treat the superintendents of the institution with respect. He must keep good hours, and must not expect to come in later than eleven, without a pass, procurable beforehand from the superintendent. He is further urged, though of course there is no compulsion in this particular, to be regular in his attendance at morning and evening prayers, on the ground that "it cannot be considered creditable for any man, that he should absent himself from the worship of God;" and we are glad to learn that the attendance on the devotional services of the Home is good, and steadily on the increase.

As was to be expected, the opposition which the institution met with at the outset, from those who lived by plundering the sailor, has been active and vigorous ever since. Even at the present day, the crimps and their touters will board vessels working up the river, and, in defiance of the law, will entangle their victims before they arrive in port. To defeat these ends as far as possible, the authorities of the Home employ persons to board ships at Gravesend, and distribute the Home cards, and they authorize carmen to attend the ships on their arrival in dock, and bring the sailors and their luggage to Well Street. In this endeavour they are, however, too often thwarted by men who waylay the vehicles on their route, or by the carmen themselves, who are not always proof against the persuasions of the crimp. Still, in spite of all opposition, the Home prospers, and only needs fresh funds to enlarge its accommodations and extend its usefulness, which is daily becoming more appreciated by the sailor.

The Well Street Home, it must be remembered, is the parent of all other institutions of the kind. Since its establishment, no less than twenty-five other Sailors' Homes have been opened in the United Kingdom, sixteen of which are in England, viz., in Bristol, Cardiff, Devonport, Dover, Falmouth, Gloucester, Great Yarmouth, Hull, Liverpool, Poplar, Milford, North Shields, Plymouth, Portsmouth, Sunderland, and Southampton: five are in Ireland, viz., in Belfast, Cork, Dublin, Limerick, Queenstown; and four in Scotland, viz., in Glasgow, Greenock, Leith, and Stornaway. There are, further, many in foreign and colonial ports. Our readers will remember that the noble institution at Liverpool, the

foundation-stone of which was laid by the late lamented Prince Consort, was unfortunately burned to the ground about two years ago: it has, however, risen rapidly from its ruins, and before this sheet goes to press will have been re-opened for the admission of 150 sailors.

Before quitting this subject we must say one word on the Destitute Sailors' Asylum, which, standing close to the Home, shares in the advantages of its administration, and extends its helping hand to the penniless seaman, whom misfortune, or the villany of heartless knaves, has reduced to helplessness. Since the opening of the Asylum, in 1827, nearly 40,000 seamen, utterly destitute, have been sheltered, fed, and relieved; numbers of them have been despatched to their homes and friends, and numbers also have been helped to engagements on board ship. During the year ending April, 1861, no less than 777 poor fellows were supplied with food, shelter, and, in many cases, clothing—the hard winter and the blocked-up condition of the river having greatly aggravated the sufferings of the poor seamen.

In conclusion, we may remind all our readers who are in a condition to respond to the appeal, that the exercise of their philanthropy is called for: if they have followed us thus far, they will admit that there is no existing institution which has a more valid claim upon the sympathies of a maritime people.

VENTNOR.

BY CUTHBERT BEDD.

VENTNOR, the capital of the Isle of Wight "Undercliff," and of Sir James Clark's "British Madeira," a sun-lit town that sits basking in the lap of Nature, and is mirrored by the sea—Ventnor, the most charming district of the most charming island of Great Britain—an island of which Michael Drayton, in his "Polyolbion," two centuries and a half ago, said—

"Of all the southern isles it holds the highest place,
And evermore hath been the great'st in Britain's grace"—

Ventnor is a name which to me, and, haply, to many others of my readers, will recall the happiest memories and most enjoyable days. But to some, the name must be associated with mingled thoughts of suffering and joy, of chastisements and mercies, of sickness giving way to health, of strength taking the place of weakness; while to others the name may sound the knell of earthly bliss, and recall the severance of dearest ties.

For, alas! to many, like Rome to Adonais, Ventnor is at once the paradise and the grave. They go there but to die. And yet, if climate and skill can do aught under God to restore the drooping frame and prolong the life that is dear to us, then is Ventnor and its vicinity the very district to which the invalid should be borne. Its climate and position recommend it strongly to the consumptive and delicate, and its scenery commends it unto all: so much so, that Miss Sewell, of Bonchurch, says in her "Ursula," "There is a verse spoken of a very different country, which often comes to my mind when I think of this. 'It is a land which the Lord thy God careth for. The eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.' Sometimes it has even seemed to me that heaven itself can scarcely be more beautiful."

If Sir James Clark was not the geographical discoverer of Ventnor, he, at any rate, discovered its capabilities, and denoted how they might be turned to a useful and profitable account, and was the magician through the wave of whose goose-quill (in the pages of

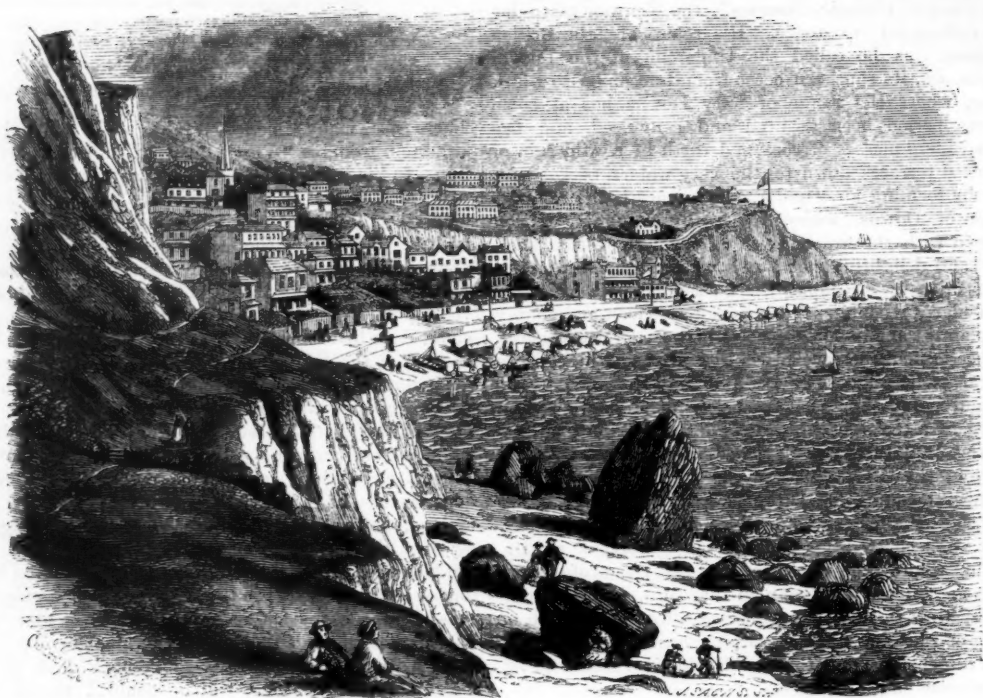
his work on "The Influence of Climate in the Prevention and Cure of Chronic Diseases") the Ventnor of to-day has sprung into existence. His report of "the British Madeira," as he called the Undercliff of the Isle of Wight, i.e., its southern coast from Lucombe to Black Gang, where the range of lofty Downs has at some remote period been fissured and convulsed, and has hurled huge masses of rock and earth in a wild ruin of confused terraces down to the very waters of the sea, thereby forming an "under cliff" beneath the rampart range of Downs, where the rocky ruins have been covered with the graceful veil of vegetation—this sheltered and delightful spot was soon brought into notice and fashion by Sir James Clark's report. He had more particularly recommended it to sufferers from pulmonary complaints; and invalids, especially those on whose cheek the hectic flush betrayed that dire disease which decks in charms its saddest ravages, quickly thronged to the dry and sunny shore, whose sheltering cliffs warded off the fierce attacks of hostile winds, and where all the beauties of nature were lavished in profusion. As the centre of the Undercliff, Ventnor soon began to assert its natural claims for supremacy; and, in 1828, what had been done for the Undercliff generally by Sir James Clark, was effected for Ventnor in particular by Dr. Martin, whose able work, assisted by his professional skill as a resident physician in the town, from that day to this, drew thither that stream of tourists in search of health or pleasant quarters, which has steadily swelled in its dimensions, and thereby developed Ventnor to its present size and importance.

For Ventnor is essentially a modern creation; and although it is not my intention in the present paper to attempt to write a condensed but complete guide-book to the capital of Southern Vectis—nor, indeed, is it necessary to do so—yet I have just been looking through a pile of such books; and it is so curious to note from them how rapid has been the rise of Ventnor, that I will briefly refer to some books now lying before me, more especially as the mention of them may suggest to the reader the sources where he may pursue his inquiries concerning this spot, if he be so minded. Such books as Pennant's "Journey from London to the Isle of Wight," and Wyndham's and Tomkin's *Tours* in 1793 and 1794, are really, so far as the Ventnor of to-day is concerned, of such antiquated date, that they may be dismissed from notice, or consigned to the limbo of Leland. The medical works already quoted, and those by Drs. Lees and Granville, treat of Ventnor from their own professional, though important, point of view. Mantell, Forbes, Fitton, Hopkins, Bristow, and others, have made us intimate with its geology; Sir H. Englefield and Sir R. Worsley have made known to us its history; and in the writings of the Rev. Legh Richmond, Miss Sewell, and the Rev. W. Adams, we have many agreeable glimpses of its native scenery. But it is to other books of a more comprehensive character that the practical tourist must turn for information. Such books are the locally published guide-books by Brannon, Hassell, Clarke, Bullar, Sturch, etc.; or those by Black or Bradshaw. Knight's "Land we Live In" writes very pleasantly of Ventnor and its vicinity; and Black's "Where shall we go?" will be found useful; and all these have the merits of cheapness and compactness. Peel's "Fair Island" justly regards the island as a poem, and treats it accordingly, and not without power, sweetness, and melody; while "The Queen's Isle," by Rosa Raine, not only deals with it poetically, but blends topography and history "with Church truths" in a very agreeable manner, and invites the reader

"To yon fair island of the sea,
Where tower, and mount, and woodland lea,
The wind that stirs each rustling tree,
And every murmuring billow free,
Shall whisper holy truths to thee;
Tales of devoted mission bands,
Who serve the Church in distant lands."

There are many Isle of Wight books published by Brannon, from his "Vectis Scenery," at twenty-five shillings, to his "Pocket Guide," at one; but, in the large print of Ventnor in the former, the view has unfortunately been taken at very low water; and this, together with the increase of the buildings, makes it not only an unattractive picture, but one whose faithfulness is a thing of the past. Barker's very prettily illustrated volume of "Vecta," published about eighteen years since, does little more for Ventnor than Cooke's "New Picture of the Isle of Wight," of forty-nine years ago, for it limits its description of the place to fifteen lines. Although it is without illustrations, yet, to my mind, the guide-book to the Isle of Wight is that published by Stanford, and written by the Rev. E. Venables, of Bonchurch, assisted by competent writers in the various departments of geology, natural history, botany, entomology, sea-weeds, agriculture, etc.; and although the price of the book is somewhat higher than the other guide-books, yet it is well worth being purchased by the tourist in that "little isle that checks the westering tide"—as Collins says—not only for its correct and varied information, but also for its very valuable map. Provided with a good map and guide-book such as this, the visitor to Ventnor will be enabled to enjoy the charms of "that beautiful island which," according to the high opinion of Sir Walter Scott, in "The Surgeon's Daughter," "he who has once seen never forgets, through whatever part of the wide world his future path may carry him."

The day is not so very far distant, when our eminent marine painter, Mr. E. W. Cooke, made his sketch of fishing-boats and sea-craft, which, for default of better materials, were made to do duty for the leading subject in his etching of "Ventnor." The little fishing village had not then begun to attain its Australian and American rapidity of growth; and the old views of Ventnor, in which a mill on the top of a cliff, and a stream pouring down its face, are the chief features, do not give us the ghost of an idea of the modern Ventnor. Indeed, the mill has gone, and, although the stream remains, yet you must go close up to it before you can discover it; but, when you have done so, you may discover many beauties in its downward leap, especially if you have to cross it as many times as the present writer did during one of his Ventnor visits, when he went to and fro between the Esplanade and his lodgings in that pleasant group of cliff-poised houses called Devonshire Terrace, belonging to Mr. Bull, the proprietor of boats and bathing machines. His houses on land must be as numerous as his houses on wheels; for when my lodgings had been changed to the Marine Parade, I found that I had not changed my landlord. I have also a pleasant memory of other lodgings still lower down, on the Esplanade; but, on the whole, I should prefer the airy site of Devonshire Terrace, from whence there was a glorious prospect over sea and land. Near to the flag-staff between the terrace and the edge of the cliff, a coast-guard man was usually posted on his preventive service; for the days of smugglers are not yet passed, although they do not visit us in the guise borne by them in novels. As I was a toper of the picturesque, and as the coast-guard man was an amiable individual, I often made "an excuse for the glass;" and as his tele-



scope was of great power, it could disclose to me all the figures on board the men-of-war that sailed up and down the channel. But it never disclosed to me a smuggler but once; and then it was only through my implicit reliance on my friend's veracity that I was enabled to believe that the mild-looking passenger in spectacles, chimney-pot hat, and blue swallow-tail coat, seated placidly in the stern-sheets of a smack, was indeed one of the most astute and desperate defrauders of the revenue who had ever set the laws and the coast-guard men at defiance.

When Sir James Clark and Dr. Martin had instructed the public in the health-giving resources of "the British Madeira," the little fishing-village of Cooke's etching became rapidly changed into a fashionable watering-place. The "cleanly cots of the village of Ventnor," noted by Wyndham in 1794, gradually gave way to a medley of houses of every possible known and unknown order of architecture, which were strewn broadcast, and without design, upon the rocky slope of the amphitheatre formed in front of Boniface Down, and looking towards the sea. Break-neck precipices and zig-zag roads, at every alarming angle of declivity, intercept the labyrinth of houses, which stand (to all appearance) on each other's heads, or peep over each other's shoulders, and settle down on rocky ledges, out of which are scooped baby gardens of more than baby loveliness, where fuschias and geraniums grow into trees, and myrtles and heliotropes brave the "ethereal mildness," that characterizes the fiercest winter; where the hawthorn has been known to blossom even at Christmas, and where the Virginian creeper twines up to the very chimney-pots, and will even crown their smoky heads with autumnal coronals of crimsoned leaves. All these houses seem to have dropped into their places, just as the spectators at a Roman amphitheatre may have dropped into theirs; and they crowd, and jostle, and peep out one above another, and seem to have a unison of design only in one parti-

cular, which is, to have a good look at the sea. Higgedly-piggledy is decidedly the plan upon which Ventnor has been built; and it must be confessed that the general effect is successful in a picturesque point of view.

Amid all the glaring innovations that attend the displacement of a fishing-village in order to make room for a fashionable watering-place, the old "Crab and Lobster" house of call for fishermen held its ground, and continues to hold it, notwithstanding that it has blossomed from a humble-budding public-house into a full-flowering inn. But hotels sprung up; and the "Royal" and "Matine" in the upper part of the town, and the "Esplanade Hotel" down on the beach, offer their several comforts and attractions for visitors. In fact, it was thought that the Ventnor hotels and boarding-houses were insufficient for the accommodation of the numerous visitors, and a too-sanguine joint-stock company, a year ago, converted the old Worsley and Yarborough mansion of Appuldurcombe into a monster hotel—a scheme which went up like a rocket, and came down like the stick; for it speedily collapsed, and the bright omnibus, which had been started from Ryde, had to turn its pole in another direction. The railway scheme from Ryde to Ventnor will probably be more successful, and, in the end, an advantage to the town, although at present looked upon with disfavour. There is a pretty little market-place, and an abundance of good shops, wherewith the visitor can be supplied with the outward adornments of the pretty Isle of Wight lace, or the inward necessities and luxuries of life. Bazaars and shops for the sale of shells, stones, and seaweeds, are among the indigenous productions of a seaside town, and are therefore to be met with in Ventnor. There are several chapels belonging to the various denominations of Dissenters, but only one that challenges the eye, and by its architecture satisfies the sight. It belongs to the Independents. Ventnor Church was built in 1836, at the expense of Mr. Hambrough, of Steephill Castle, and is commodious, which is about all that can

be said in its favour as an architectural edifice, save that, chiefly from its lofty position, and from its being of better design than the rest of the building, the tower and spire make a very pleasing and effective addition to the view. It is worthy of remark that the font was forgotten in the original design of this church. A new church, in the early decorated style, has recently been erected between Ventnor and Bonchurch, at the expense of some benevolent ladies, and is not only a great addition to the church accommodation, but to the landscape also. Perhaps, if charity sermons did not occur quite so often during "the season," it would be more agreeable to many of the visitors. The new National Schools, in Albert Street, are also an ornament to the town. Further on, in the same street, the visitor will light upon "The Original Donkey Depôt," and on the Esplanade will find relays of those useful animals ready bridled and saddled for use. And they may recall memories of Malvern in more ways than one, especially if they be used for the ascent of Boniface Down, whose precipitous side they will carefully climb, notwithstanding that the steepness of the path obliges them to assume an attitude which is suggestive of a slide over the donkey's tail. I do not wonder that the traditional bishop, who rode down here in the dark, should have given himself up for lost, and have vowed to St. Boniface that if he ever reached the bottom in safety he would give an acre of ground for the building of a church. But his horse carried him as safely as the donkeys would have done now-a-days; and the field called "the Bishop's Acre" still recalls the accomplishment of his equestrian feat, though tradition does not tell us of any church having been erected on that spot. Perhaps the steepness of the ascent deters many visitors from riding or scrambling to the top of the Down; for it is an undoubted fact that very few go there. Yet, as no one should quit Ventnor without viewing it from the sea, so, every visitor should take a bird's-eye view of the place from the grassy summit of St. Boniface Down. There, crouched amid the wild thyme and golden gorse, he will have a glorious panorama of sea and land that will well repay all the exertions of climbing, and the sea air and healthy breeze will invigorate him for future rambles and scrambles. From the Bonchurch side the ascent is less formidable, and the pattered donkeys may bring hither their burdens of babies and children with perfect safety.

Descending from the Down by the steep zig-zag that leads past the "Royal Hotel" and to the Esplanade, we find ourselves face to face with the sea and the bathing-machines. The fine shingle of the shore, strewn with the transparent quartz which Mr. Billings will fashion for you into "Ventnor diamonds," is girdled with a broad belt of sand, which offers every inducement to the bathers. The ladies and children follow their Nereid pursuits opposite to the Esplanade; the gentlemen nearer to Devonshire Terrace, or out on the open sea; but they who pull out to sea for this purpose should not trust themselves without a local boatman who is well acquainted with the whereabouts of the many sunken rocks, that make the coast extremely perilous. Four years ago, I was witness to an accident, (chiefly caused by carelessness, and by the visitors taking upon themselves the management of the boat,) which resulted in the upsetting of the boat, and the drowning of the two visitors, although abundant assistance was close at hand. The young sailor, who should have had the management of the boat, was saved with difficulty, and when in an exhausted state. A well-known clergyman, then staying in Ventnor, preached a sermon upon the event, that same night, upon the Esplanade—the while the magnifi-

cent comet of '58 displayed its streaming fires over the summit of Boniface Down. I have also seen accidents from the sunken rocks occur at the Ventnor Regatta; although, as it is the nature of "the duck-hunt," and other amusements provided on that occasion, to tumble people into the sea, nothing more serious than a fright and a wet jacket usually ensues to mar the day's pleasures.



A DISHEVELLED PAIR.

We have no time now for Bonchurch, or St. Lawrence, or any other of the many lions in the near neighbourhood of Ventnor; but let us walk along the Esplanade, past the bath-house, and on to the cliffs towards Steephill Castle. Here is one of the young lady bathers; her ringlets, wet and glistening with the salt water, are given to the wind, and, all dishevelled and unconfined, are being allowed to dry in the sun and breeze. She carries her Skye-terrier in her arms, and, from his dripping condition, has evidently been giving him a dip, either in the sea or in that pleasant stream that flows across this grassy cliff from Steephill. From the expression of his countenance, he has enjoyed it quite as little as any young gentleman who is invited by a professional lady in blue, to "be a man, and come to his own Sairey." We leave this dishevelled pair to use the sun as a hand-towel, and dry as best they may; and, crossing the stream, we turn and look at our view of Ventnor. The town fills the Cove, though, from its amphitheatrical form, we can only see but a portion of it. There is the tower and spire of St. Catherine's Church, and beneath it we see the end of Church Street, where a mass of rock overhangs the roadway in a very threatening manner. As the street advances from this point towards the two hotels, the one side of the road is left open; and from the low buttressed wall there is a good view over the Esplanade and shore. These two attractions of Ventnor we see, however, to more advantage from where we are now standing; there is the long sweep of the Esplanade, with its steps down to the beach, where we see the bathing-machines, the boats, and the tents of the dealers in polished stones and shells. The long garden wall bounds the other side of the Esplanade, in the centre of which

we may discern the door and windows of Mr. Bull's office, where we may go to hire our sailing-boats. At the farther end is the "Esplanade Hotel," which is well supplied with that verandah which is so useful in Ventnor, where, if the truth must be told, there is a lack of shade, and also of seats. Could not the Esplanade and zig-zags be planted with hardy trees? Further on, at the edge of the cliff, is Devonshire Terrace and its flag-staff; and down below us on the beach are some huge fragments of rock, which may be studied with advantage both by the geologist and sketcher, and whose welcome shade is taken advantage of by novel readers and croquet workers. Near at hand, among the rocky pools of water, the possessors of an aquarium are busy in their search for anemones, or a lively specimen of the *Mesembryanthemum*. "Above us roll the grassy downs; beneath us sweeps the restless sea;" all is life, light, air, and motion; and as we watch "the stately ships go on," and the sea-gulls skim the dancing waves, our hearts may well be lifted up to thankfulness that we are spared for the healthy enjoyment of the many lovely scenes of which Ventnor is the centre.

LEDESDALE GRANGE.

A TALE OF COAL-FIELDS AND CORN-FIELDS.

CHAPTER XI.—FEASTING AND MOURNING.

In a long upper room belonging to the works of Marriott and Sons, the supper prepared for their workpeople was spread out, and the men assembled who were expected to do it justice. The foundations or supports of this apartment were by no means as trustworthy as could have been desired on so important an occasion; and of this alarming fact the visitors were made acquainted in a manner considerably calculated to arouse their apprehensions. The room was at its fullest, and the lecturer's eloquence was at its height, when a mysterious voice was heard requesting the assembled company to have pity upon themselves, and not suffer the tumultuous expression of excited feeling to involve them in a common ruin. They were further permitted to give vent to their enthusiasm by clapping with the hand, but the more favourite demonstration of *stamping* was strictly prohibited. Nevertheless, this feeble fabric managed to sustain, not its living burden only, but likewise three enormous tables, which might well have groaned beneath the weight imposed on them, could anything so dismal as a groan have been connected with the scene. An assembly of more thoroughly contented looking guests Mr. Rivers had never witnessed; their big brown faces were radiant with soap and satisfaction, and there were eyes, which, turned to where the master presided at one gigantic table, said far more than their tongues could ever have found words for. Fine, sturdy looking fellows many of them were, with some sickly faces among them—some frames which said the fires had begun to do their work; but as a mass they were a comfortable, well-cared for, healthy looking set.

Weak or strong, they were all fully up to the duty of the night; and, to use our expressive idiom, "walked into" their suppers with a zeal that needed no prompting and set nightmare at defiance. Roast beef and plum pudding, (Mr. Marriott was English to the back bone,) boiled meats and hot pies, were the order of the night, together with a pint of ale for those who drank it, though many of the Colebrook men were tee-totalers. Such joints! Such pastry! Such puddings! In short, without dwelling longer on the eating part, which, alas for the poetry of life, is in some form an every-day affair with most of us, the

whole concern was such as to give "an edge" to an appetite very far removed from fasting, and to prove in all respects worthy of those who provided it.

The "young masters," and several of the head clerks, managers, etc., were scattered among the men, and did the honours of the various dishes, while Mr. Rivers, Mr. Lucas, and the clergyman of the parish, were placed beside the founder of the feast. It was by no means a silent affair, albeit the "flow of soul" was subordinate to the flow of gravy or of pudding; Mr. Marriott and his supporters kept up the conversation pretty briskly, and a subdued though constant murmur of voices down the long tables, showed that the guests were unconscious of restraint, and each "said his say" as it pleased him.

Percy Marriott earned laurels for himself that night, and covered the faces of his detractors with confusion. The various illustrations of his tour, prepared by himself, and which he now exhibited, were excellent, and, as the men said afterwards, they seemed to know as much about "Mount Blank," its passes and its glaciers, as if they had seen it all themselves. It must be confessed that a little figure which occupied a very prominent position in all the sketches, and was commonly supposed to represent the lecturer, was usually placed in circumstances of such extreme peril as not only to harrow the feelings of the spectators to an agonizing extent, but to render it a marvel that the original could ever have lived to tell the tale or draw the picture. Assuredly it must have been a very fortunate, as well as a very enterprising little figure, and the idea of for a moment casting a doubt upon the courage of such a little figure, was simply and entirely preposterous. The men listened with open mouth and dilated eyes to the wonderful narration—the grandeur and the horror of the snowy region, its surprises, precipices, treacherous guides, and benighted travellers; while many a "Did you ever?" "Well, well, to be sure!" expressed their just appreciation of the marvels that were detailed.

"Eh! but that 'ud be a shivery sort of place to live long by," was the observation, made with a slight shudder, by one pale-faced man, as a remarkably white mass of something was presented to his view.

"What! thee'st rather keep by thy old furnace, John?" observed his neighbour.

"Thou art right, man; it's more natural like nor all those hodge-podge, outlandish sort of topsy-turvy places, to say nothing of being a deal more advantageous."

"We'd soon melt them blocks for 'em, I reckon," said another, with an uncommonly knowing air. "They wouldn't keep that ere shape long in this country."

And then the great pluck and spirit evinced by Master Percival, together with his rare powers of oratory, were descanted on; while Mr. Marriott was vainly endeavouring to convince one of his clerical friends that it was now his turn to come forward in the capacity of public enlightener. Mr. Rivers fairly begged off, extempore addresses not being, he said, his forte. Mr. Marsden, the rector, addressed the men in a few simple, earnest words, to which they listened in profound attention. And then something was said about "Mr. Lucas going to speak." This was rather a surprise; for though, as a barrister by profession, it might be hoped that he was not altogether unaccustomed to public speaking, it was not expected that the present occasion would afford scope for his oratorical powers. However, there he was mounting the rostrum, looking taller and thinner than ever, his long visage stretched out to its utmost, and only a gleam under the shaggy eyebrows, to say that anything like fun lurked beneath a rather stern exterior.

Mr. Lucas gave a very sensible and animated sketch of various modes of life, such as might be found among his hearers. After severely but kindly censuring evil and hurtful lives, he drew several amusing pictures of what some might call "decent, harmless lives." There was the sober and respectable iron-worker, who, when he came down in the morning, said to his wife, "Wench, hast got the water boiling for we breakfast?" ate his breakfast and jogged off to his day's employment, thinking "most of nowt"—reappeared at noon with "Wench, hast got the dinner ready? I'm ready for it, anyhow!"—at night, came charged with similar demands and observations, and returned to a dormant condition with as little thought of what his present existence was tending to or fitting him for, as one of his own lumps of iron. "And there are a good many such among us," added the speaker, "not among iron-workers only, nor limited to either sex; but assuredly such people cannot be said to be really living." He then sketched several other characters, such as most present would be quite familiar with, and illustrated by them the wondrously small amount of anything deserving the name of *life*, taken only in its lowest sense, to which most people can lay claim.

Mr. Lucas closed his address with an earnest appeal to consider the great dignity and value of the gift of "life," bestowed upon each present; entreating them to regard their existence here, not as a thing distinct from, but as forming the commencement of the higher life hereafter; and directing their thoughts to the great Source of life, in the knowledge and love of whom its true worth consists.

When he sat down there was a general expectation that one of the masters would come forward to thank the speaker and close the proceedings. Mr. Marriott had been called out as soon as Mr. Lucas began his speech; but it was now discovered that not one of the family remained present. It seemed extraordinary; "but as it is growing very late," said the rector of the parish, "I think we had better sing the Doxology and let the men go home." This was accordingly done; but they did not separate without "three cheers for the best master going," given with a will which threatened to bring an *old room* about them with a vengeance.

But in the meantime, a shadow had fallen upon that master's home, and a cup of exceeding bitterness been put into his hand to drink. The son of whom he had spoken to Mr. Rivers in such glowing terms was dead; and the news of his death was that night telegraphed to his parents. Spending the long vacation with some friends in Scotland, he had gone out boating on one of the lakes, and was drowned with two of his companions. Truly there are times when to "think of living," of living without the object on whom the thought and love of years had centred is a bitter agony. Mr. Marriott was a Christian man, in the length and breadth of the expression. The words, so often a cant unmeaning phrase, "All for the best," had for him a peculiar significance, which he delighted to ponder; but now he felt it hard to realize their truthfulness, very hard indeed to "kiss the rod" which had dealt so grievous a blow.

CHAPTER XII.—MRS. FURDEN'S BIRTHPLACE.

ANDERTON FARM was on the outskirts of the village of Bentwater, and Mrs. Duckworth was its mistress. There was a Mr. Duckworth, who might reasonably have been supposed possessed of some slight interest in the property, and his own little concern in its arrangements; but, viewed in connection with the lady alluded to, he was a non-entity, a *thing* on the premises, and no more. Mrs. Duckworth was one of those persons who, with re-

spect to themselves, are fond of observing they "have eyes in their head, *they hope*;" and this statement was corroborated by her servants and children, in the bitterness of their hearts; while they added, that it was against the laws, both of nature and reason, to sleep with one of them open, as it was evident she did; which expression of feeling renders it probable that certain underhand proceedings had occasionally come to light when least anticipated.

Be that as it may, those organs of vision were undoubtedly brought to bear in a marvellous manner on all things great or small, good, bad, or indifferent—from the most majestic of hay-ricks that towered proudly in the spacious farmyard, to the minutest of goslings that commenced his education under its shadow, or fought with the young ducks on the green pond, that centre of web-footed civilization. Small wonder if Anderton Farm, with every advantage of site, soil, and superintendence, was, to all outward appearance, the model of what an English farmhouse ought to be. No marvel if the butter and cheese from that incomparable dairy were in demand before all the other butter and cheeses brought to view in the neighbouring market; or if the poultry reared by Mrs. Duckworth, of Anderton, enjoyed a popularity which—but that it unfortunately came too late, they might justly have cackled over. A good many folks were jealous of Mrs. Duckworth and her notoriety, spitefully remarking that she "knew how to make a good bargain for herself, as other people would find out in time, to their cost;" but what cared she? When did superior virtue, wisdom, talent, escape unscathed? Besides, she had tangible compensation. Looking round her, she beheld the fruit of her own care and industry, and was more than satisfied, as probably most of us in her place would have been also. A home of plenty, of beauty, and of growing prosperity was hers, and one which she might hope to bequeath to her children after her. That it was so, Mrs. Duckworth often said she had "no one to thank but herself;" and one thing was certain, she *did* thank *no one else*.

Oh, the country scents! who does not yearn after them when, plodding his foggy way through the din and bustle of a city life, some sudden breeze, wafted he scarce knows how or whence, recalls almost forgotten fragrance, and sets him vainly longing. Cowper tells us that "not rural sights alone, but rural sounds exhilarate the spirits;" but there are many who could answer that rural scents eclipse all other charms put forth by nature; and in this great attraction the farm at Anderton was rich indeed. You entered the garden, with its trim old-fashioned flower-beds, and found it laden with sweets, so that the "very air was heavy" with them; or the meadows stretching out beyond, and the cows' sweet breath came mingled with a waft of hawthorn; or the house itself, and through its open windows the creeping plants looked in, and every spot was happy in their fragrance. Then, too—(and those who are familiar with the inner life of many farmhouses will own this to be high praise indeed)—there was nothing in any part that could at all offend the eye, or vex the most fastidious taste. Why, the very pigs wore an air of refinement, had a certain *je ne sais quoi* about them, which marked them from the common herd—well-educated swine: and the hens, usually an undisciplined, undiscerning race, would not venture a claw in one of Mrs. Duckworth's flower-beds, or have flown across a paling that she had caused to be put up. Yes, everything was in subjection—weeds, even, seemed afraid to grow at Anderton, and came up nervously, while in-door dust was a thing of imagination only.

It was the time of early summer—no idle one in the country; for though Irish haymakers had not yet arrived to be scolded, were there not calves to be looked after, and lambs to be taken under consideration; *beestings* to be concocted into the richest and most exquisite of custards; and bees, with or without the stings, to be cajoled, persuaded, tinkled at, and admonished, when seeking change of residence, to trust themselves implicitly to Mrs. Duckworth's guidance? It was indeed a trying season to that lady, and not the lighter, in consequence, to her dependents generally. An additional sharpness of note and asperity of tone were observable, as servants, children, even husband were reproved as occasion called for; but she made great allowance for herself at such times, and we should hardly be behind-hand with her in charity.

It has before been said that Bentwater was Kate Purden's birthplace and early home; and, from respect to her, it may merit a few words here of special notice. Truly it had differed in no slight degree from the home allotted to her afterwards. Of villages to be met with in the North Midland Counties of England, the prettiest, most unsophisticated looking, most retired, was this said Bentwater—far removed, even in these days of rail, from the noise and bustle of a station: a peaceful spot, in which the dweller (so thinks the stranger) must needs be innocent and happy, from sheer association. There are hills around it, by no means despicable in height, though the immediate neighbourhood boasts no peculiar elevation. There are trees, which, in their stately bearings and continuous groupings, seem to imply dimensions of park land, much more than fact can warrant. But still the park is there, and, as in duty bound, it has its broad sheet of water, its deer, its gamekeeper's lodge, and its "Lovers' Walk." The Hall was built somewhat on the Hampton Court model, and generally elicited from first beholders the twin remarks, "How very pretty!" "How very sad the place should be deserted!" Deserted it was, the greater part of the year, till September brought with it its young owner, the Honourable Sydney Dashwood—for what are the claims of peasants to those of partridges! While the Honourable Sydney remained at Bentwater with his sporting friends—and they generally mustered pretty strong—he was quite the benignant landlord, visiting, if not the cottages, at least from farmhouse to farmhouse, eulogizing the good man's wheat and the good wife's wine—pure juice of the marygold—over which he groaned in confidential moments; and when he met the clergyman of the parish, begging him never to hesitate, in cases of distress or sudden emergency, but to write to him immediately, that he might assist in the relief. "A pleasant gentleman" indeed, as all allowed, was the Honourable Sydney Dashwood; and Mr. Herbert must have thought so, for he treated this benevolent request as one of his "pleasant" jests.

But in Mr. Eversley, the retired banker, who owned that pretty cottage, called by all who knew their duty in that respect, "The Villa," both clergyman and people found a much more efficient helper than in their noble landlord. He had a goodly family of children, all of whom were born at Bentwater, and loved it as their native village. When Kate, his eldest daughter, arriving at woman's estate, returned from the boarding-school at which the last two years of her life had been passed, she wondered why the cottagers failed, somehow, to realize her ideas, pre-conceived of them, as village poor. "Probably, my dear, from your having fixed your standard much too high," was her mother's enlightening observation; "as a child, you would naturally not perceive

all their shortcomings." Whereat Kate rubbed her chin, and looked still unsatisfied. If, however, the residents felt that it came short of perfection, visitors at Bentwater were never weary of eulogizing the beauty of its scenery, always ready to go into raptures with some point of loveliness or other. One lady, fresh from the neighbourhood of Russell Square, would work herself into ecstasies at what she denominated the "essentially romantic" character of the landscape.

"Romantic! how?" inquired Mr. Eversley, who was noted for making people explain themselves.

"Why, my dear sir, what *can* be more charmingly shut out from the din and worry—I had almost said the vices—of the outer world, than this delicious spot? I am sure, in walking from the village through that exquisite shrubbery, up to the church and hall this morning, I was nearly overpowered with the beauty of everything round me. And then the rural sounds, such as that horn your postman winds every night and morning." Kate laughed, for she had grown so used to it. "Yes, indeed, when I hear those notes of his echoing through the woods, on his return from Merridale, quite a peculiar sensation comes over me."

"Ah! *that's* romantic," said Mr. Eversley. "I see."

"That little row of almshouses, now, at the entrance of the shrubbery—what a peaceful nest it looked!"

Everybody laughed at this, and Kate repeated the word "nest," in a tone of great amusement.

"Birds in their little nests," said her father, "agree better, it is to be hoped, than our friends Nancy and Betty in *theirs*. You have chosen an unhappy simile, my dear lady, for it is, I regret to say, the reverse of a peaceful spot."

"Especially," added his wife, "if you chance to call on Betty, and not on Nancy, or give an ounce of tea to Sally, and none to Susan—then, indeed, the wordy war begins."

"Really!" said Mrs. Amabel; "and it appeared to me a scene in which the evening of one's days might close so tranquilly."

"But don't you think," inquired Mr. Eversley, "that we need more to insure tranquillity for either evening or morning of our days, than outward scenes, however lovely?"

"Surely we do; but then, you know, I feel like this: 'God made the country, man made the town.'"

Mr. Eversley smiled, and shook his head.

Great was Mrs. Duckworth's delight on hearing that "Miss Kate" was again at "the Villa," and great were the preparations for receiving her on the evening of her first visit to the farm. "Miss Kate" had always been a favourite, and they pronounced that Mrs. Purdon was "just her own old self," and "just the same as ever." Many tales of past times were remembered, and Mrs. Purdon inquired about all her former friends. She must especially see Kitty Moorcroft. Kitty had been in childhood Mrs. Purdon's playmate and namesake: her mother having formerly been a servant at the "Villa," the little girls had often been together. Kitty had been extremely fond of the young lady, who now expected some pleasurable demonstrations on her part; but none came. Kitty turned away, and seemed inclined to run, but did not.

"Kitty, come here; do you not know me again?"

"Yes, miss—ma'am—Miss Kate."

"Why do you not come to me, then? Are you quite well, Kitty, and your parents?"

"Quite well, Mrs. Purdon; I hope I see you well."

"I so often think of you, Kitty, and have been glad to hear you were going on well."

Poor Kitty! what sudden twinge of conscience sent

the blood rushing to her cheeks and temples, as if it would burst its veins, leaving her white, trembling, and abashed, before her friend? She did not speak, however, and when Kate, caressingly and tenderly, asked what was troubling her, the girl hid her face in her apron, and sobbed convulsively, but still said nothing.

"Mother, dear, there's something sadly wrong with Kitty Moorcroft, I fear." The two ladies were walking home together, enjoying the soft evening air, which very gently stirred the noble trees around them. "Have you the least idea what it's all about?"

"None whatever; but for some time past, the change of look and manner in the girl has struck me. I could almost wish she had another home."

"I could very much wish it," said Kate; and there was a long silence at last.

"What a difference, mamma, between an imaginary milkmaid and a pictorial milkmaid, and the real thing!"

Mrs. Eversley laughed, and said there generally was a "difference between imagination and reality."

"Yes, but one has such an idea of innocence and happiness connected with those great red-cheeked damsels, with pails on their heads, one sees in pictures; and the girls about farm-houses don't come up to the mark by any means."

"I am more and more convinced," replied the elder lady, "that there is something about the daily occupations of farm life calculated to have a very injurious influence on the mind of a young girl. The boisterous intercourse with the men-servants is bad enough in itself; but does it not seem to you, as if there were a constant demand on the more coarse part of one's nature in their employments? I doubt if any could fully understand this who was not pretty intimately acquainted with the style of work required."

"I am thinking," said Mrs. Purdon, "of our poor bank girls at Ledesdale; *ideally*, there could be little comparison between these country Hebes or Phebes, or whatever they are, and the poor, degraded, sickly-looking object, in her miserable coat and bandaged head, working at the pit mouth; but I am afraid the effect on each, of their several occupations, will prove greater similarity than could have been imagined." And this comparison would seem to have offered themes for thought sufficiently engrossing to both ladies, as they finished their walk home in silence.

OTAGO;

OR, A RUSH TO THE NEW GOLD-FIELDS OF NEW ZEALAND.

CHAPTER VII.—COMPETITION FOR EMIGRANTS—REGRETS OF EMIGRANTS—QUEENSLAND—EMPLOYMENT FOR EMIGRANTS—GOLD-DIGGING—NEW ZEALAND—GOVERNMENTS OF THE COLONIES—INSECTS—THE MAORIS.

THERE is a great competition amongst the Australian colonies and New Zealand for emigrants from the mother country. From each colony pamphlets are sent for circulation in the United Kingdom, and the peculiar advantages of each over all the rest of the earth, are shown in colours too bright to be real or long enduring. Money is voted by most of the colonies for the purpose of bringing out emigrants. The government of Queensland has sent agents to the mother country, to lecture in the rural districts and enlighten the natives on what a glorious future awaits them, would they only be seduced by him to seek a home in that young colony. After the arrival of the English mail, in the month of October, 1861, colonial journals stated that these agents were "doing wonders," and it was proposed

in some of the colonies that they should resort to the same means adopted by Queensland, send lecturers to the United Kingdom and try to increase the tide of emigration, which has so nearly ceased to flow upon them. By each mail to England, the newspapers in some of the colonies send a summary of news, containing flattering accounts of the colony each represents.

While Her Majesty's subjects in the United Kingdom have all these opportunities for acquiring information of the colonies, I may seem presumptuous in offering some general remarks; but I claim to know as much of the prospects of an emigrant in the colonies as any one—having resided in four of them, been on intimate terms with working men from all of them, and known something of the official reports concerning the general prosperity of each. Furthermore, my opinions will be impartial, and an impartial statement concerning the colonies an English reader does not often see. I am not interested in the prosperity of one colony more than another, and hope never to see either of them again. In forming an opinion as to the real benefit English people derive by emigrating to the Australian colonies, I should not consider my own opinion alone, unless I allowed the opinions of others to have some influence in forming it. Many form opinions of a colony by their own success in it, and never look at the condition of the thousands amongst whom they reside, although they have daily opportunities of seeing whether they have been benefited by emigrating or not. I think there is an impossibility of being mistaken when I state that the majority of English people in the colonies whom I have heard express an opinion, regret having emigrated, and say that when they can get the means to return with, they will go back to "Old England" again.

While all admit there is a little better chance of acquiring money in the colonies, than in the old country, yet they say the chance is not sufficiently great, that one should be induced to leave home and friends and go to the other side of the world to seek it. Those in the old country who are friendless, homeless, and destitute, could they reach the colonies might ever remain so; but they would not have the cause to regret emigrating that thousands have. Many in emigrating have left comfortable homes, where they have enjoyed much social and domestic happiness, and landed where they found the struggle for existence as fierce as in the land they left—with hardships to endure, unthought of before, and without the compensation of many little revenues of happiness left behind them.

Notwithstanding all I can say or write, people will emigrate; and those are the persons to whom advice should be given, and not those who have the wisdom "to bear the evils they know." Those who will emigrate, I would advise to go to Canada. The distance is not far, and, if dissatisfied, they may be able to return. If they do not take the money with them to pay their way back, they may get some employment and earn it. For the last four or five years, any man who lands in the colonies without money, must be very lucky if he does not have to take two years of colonial experience, however anxious he may be to return. There are people who will not go to Canada, but to some of Her Majesty's southern colonies; and it is to them my advice should be given, as to which they should choose for a home.

There can be no hesitation in saying that a choice should be made between Victoria, Queensland, and New Zealand. Of each of these places I will state all I know, good and bad, and compare each with the others.

The occupations intending emigrants have followed, and intend to follow, should have something to do in

guiding them to the choice of a home. All those who have a little capital, and intend to follow a pastoral life, should go to Queensland. A chance still exists there of taking up pastoral land, or of obtaining land already occupied, without the payment of a sum which few emigrants possess. The soil of Queensland is generally much better than Victoria; but the climate is not quite so agreeable. In a few years it will be a country far superior to Victoria for agriculture; for it is now said to be proved beyond a doubt, that cotton, tobacco, and some other articles of commerce, can be produced there, which as yet the Victorians do not claim as sources of future wealth; but any one who goes there now to engage in agriculture, must wait for a fortune, under many little annoyances. Time may give him a good market, increase the value of his land, and place him in what would be thought a wealthy position. This is as much as most new countries can do for an emigrant; and in this way his chances are better than in Victoria.

Victoria is farther advanced in all the refinements and vices of civilization, than any of the other colonies, and the strife for obtaining the necessities of life is stronger, and employment more difficult to be obtained. There is a chance, a very small chance, of an emigrant doing better on the gold-fields of Victoria, than by seeking employment elsewhere. Over one hundred thousand manage to support themselves on the gold-fields. It is true, a majority of them are in rags, and that hundreds of them often want a loaf; but rags are no disgrace to a man on the diggings, and those who are the most frequently hungry are generally those who take the least care of their money when they do get any. The diggers live a wretched life of independence, where their liberty of speech and action is part compensation for the hardships they endure, and hope forms the other part.

Gold-digging is now hard work, very poorly paid for; but thousands prefer it to any other laborious occupation in the southern colonies, although confident that they could save more money at any other employment. Gold-digging has been called very uncertain business; but its uncertainty has become very much reduced—so much so, as to amount to a certainty that not more than one out of a hundred will make more at it than what will support them in misery.

New Zealand possesses some attractions to win the love of an emigrant, that the other colonies have not. Its climate is more temperate, and like what the emigrant has been accustomed to at home. It has abundance of good water, and the soil is fertile, and is never burnt and baked brown in the summer, as in Australia, where thousands of acres of grain, often through the want of a gentle shower of rain, yield but half the crop they should, which frequently does not amount to as much as the grain sown to obtain it. New Zealand possesses a liberal government, that has established a liberal land law.

The governments of South Australia, Queensland, and New Zealand, are in the hands of sensible men and honest politicians, who seem to have some regard for the welfare of their fellow citizens, and act upon intelligent principles. This is what no one can, or ever could say, of Victoria, and tell the truth.

Amongst other advantages that New Zealand has over the Australian colonies, as a home for emigrants, is that its soil is not infested by insects and reptiles. In the opinion of intending emigrants, this may not be thought worthy of consideration; but when they have lived where ants and many other things are a source of constant annoyance and irritation of mind sufficient to keep one from ever enjoying in the summer time that

calm serenity necessary to all who would live a happy life, they will think differently.

The large ants called "bull-dogs," that will sometimes show fight to a man armed with a stick—the centipedes, scorpions, and venomous snakes, everywhere to be found in Australia, are none of them to be met in New Zealand. These creatures in Australia are very industrious, and some of them very fond of travelling. A few years' familiarity with them lessens the annoyance of their company in the day; but in the month of March they delight in taking exercise by walks and crawls in the shade of the night; and my aversion to having them around me when wishing for repose could not be overcome, not even by the familiar acquaintanceship of frequently finding a centipede in my blankets. I had rather be where nothing can creep over me but the chilling sensation caused by the cold blasts of a Greenland winter, than live where the earth is so full of life that it seems unable to contain it, and a part of that animal existence, for want of room, is crowded into the fancy world formed by our dreams. The mind strolling in dreamland, should only meet with what gives it a love for earth and its denizens; but he who strives for this state of repose in Australia, in the summer time, will meet with difficulty in acquiring it.

New Zealand is sure at some time to become the home of a nation; and by the discovery of gold-fields in Otago, the prophetic New Zealander of Macaulay will take a long stride towards that interesting and melancholy amusement of sketching the ruins of St. Paul's. Although there has been a misunderstanding with the Maoris in the northern island, threatening a renewal of war, it should not prevent any emigrants from going there but such as are not wanted and would be the wrong sort of people for the place, even in time of peace. Whether the Maoris are right or wrong, they must be put down when in rebellion, and, as far as I can see, there will always be trouble with them while they exist. If they were a slavish, low-spirited people, they might exist as a people for many years; but, being naturally a noble-souled race, jealous of their rights, and possessing courage to maintain them, they will, if unhappily cause of quarrel arise, probably have to be thoroughly subdued.

I have only seen New Zealand under very unfavourable circumstances; yet I could not advise emigrants not to go there, supposing them determined to go to some of the southern colonies. The islands of New Zealand were only proclaimed to be British territory on the 21st day of May, 1840, and the progress that has been made in settling them since then, has certainly been great, when we consider the part of the world where those islands lie. They could not have increased so much in importance as a colony without many inducements to attract emigrants. I do not advise any to emigrate; but to those who will go south, my advice is to try Queensland or New Zealand: I should prefer the latter place.

A LONG WALK AND A SHORT STORY.

CHAPTER I.

In the summer of 185— it was my good fortune to be visiting in Cornwall, and, moreover, in one of the most wildly beautiful parts of that interesting county. The home of my friend is near the southern coast, and the surrounding scenery is more varied than perhaps that of any shire in this our fair old England; for within half an hour's walk, in opposite directions, one seems to be in widely differing districts, and breathing as different atmospheres. Towards the north the ground rises, and from deeply-wooded knolls we gradually

ascend, the vegetation becoming less luxuriant as we trudge onward, until the many-tinted foliage of majestic woods gives place to stunted trees scattered here and there over the stretching moorland, their bare trunks and few straggling limbs all leaning one way, as if shrinking back from the cold cutting winds that sweep furiously over the desolate heath. But, kind reader, I dare say you are of harder stuff than to mind a little buffeting by the breeze. Put your back against that tottering old pollard. No fear! he won't fall yet; he has strong underground arms and fingers that cling tenaciously to the cold soil in which he lives. Press your hat firmly on your head, and look around you. There! is not that worth seeing? Hill and dale, and sharp ridges cutting clear against the sky, all blended together in one beautiful grey tint in the distance, far, far away, till the unaccustomed eye aches with the vastness of its vision. So, is there no majesty, no awful grandeur in this barren waste, where no living moving thing disturbs the rude harmony of the landscape? What do you say? You must "bawl in mine ear" now, for otherwise your gentle voice will be carried too swiftly past for me to catch its articulations. Ah! you wish to know what that enormous scaffolding on the neighbouring hill side means. Looks something like a gigantic gibbet, does it? Ha! ha! Curious the desolation of this moor, is it not? Your gibbet, my friend, is part and parcel of a mine; it is the pump that conveys away the water from the earth, fathoms and fathoms down below the surface; and there, underneath that bare motionless heath, day and night proceeds the ceaseless toil. Hundreds are working with pickaxe, spade, and shovel, and the ever-revolving rope ascends and descends the narrow shaft, with its huge *libbals** like mighty buckets in a mighty well, each as it emerges into daylight discharging its burden of precious ore, and again hurrying down to the very bowels of the earth to receive its ponderous load, which is again poured forth in never-ending regularity. There is toil and bustle below, though above the timid hare and the wheeling plover have it all to themselves.

Another time we may explore the hidden depths of those wondrous mines, but to-day our walk leads us to other spots. We will turn our backs on this cold uncourteous blast, and wend our way towards other climes.

Yes, indeed, other climes to all intents and purposes, though an hour or so's brisk walking is all the time we require to bring us there. We will leave my friend's house on our left, and save a mile or so by taking this narrow lane, with its high, fern-covered banks. Now, then. Come along through the wood, and along this fertile valley, and out again amongst the waving corn-fields, with their golden harvest just ready for the sickle. Capital! You walk famously; now for one more effort. Let us gain the summit of this hill, and our labour for the day is over. Throw yourself down on the smooth mossy bank, and drink in huge draughts of fresh health-giving sea air. Here we are. Are your nerves good? Will your head become giddy? Well, *crawl* to the edge of the precipice, and gaze down its perpendicular sides to the rocks tumbled about in confusion hundreds of feet below, where the huge waves burst asunder on their shaggy weed-covered heads, or roar uncouthly in the echoing caverns.

Look to your left. Is not that a lovely spot? Let me describe it. On a wide plateau, covered with soft mossy grass and leafy shrubs, and rising gradually from the enormous masses of rock that fringe the shore,

stands an old-fashioned one-storied house, so close under the cliff, that were we to walk to the point immediately above, we could look down into its very chimney mouths—the lawn in front, tastily laid out with beds of bright flowers, and thence descending in sloping terraces, till the verdure gives place to solid rock. We'll look at it from below; for a narrow stair is cut in the face of the cliff, and he who has a steady head and sufficient nerve may easily descend. Gently; not too fast. And now we are again on terra firma, and can examine and criticise at our leisure. Jack Frost is a stranger here; and the tender plants of other climes flourish the whole year round in the genial warmth, nor need they fear the coming winter; for here are they safe alike from blighting winds and nipping cold. But let us enter the picturesque abode; for I have known its inmate long enough to be certain of a warm reception for "self and friend." No need to knock at the open door. The dear old dame has seen us, and is quite prepared; she well knows that I never pass this way without dropping in for a gossip, or *tell*, with her, as she calls it. Here we are; and now let me introduce you to Dame Martin, as she sits in her high-backed arm-chair, erect and dignified, herself a picture—a picture of by-gone times. In figure she is large and portly. She wears a large-patterned chintz dress, with a handkerchief crossed on her ample chest, white as the driven snow; a white linen apron, with pockets, descends from her rotund though still shapely waist; and her white silvery hair is surmounted by a cap, with (I must be minute, fair readers) two very full muslin borders, set in plaits as stiff as parchment. Her mittened hands are busy at her knitting, and so accustomed are they to the work, that she chats, or reads her old large-print Bible which lies open beside her, without once looking down at the nimble fingers, as they cleverly turn the heel, the well-known "Pons Asinorum" of stocking making. Her sight, too, is good—no need has she of spectacles; and her voice has no tremble in it, nor does her memory ever make a slip, albeit fourscore years have rolled over her stately head. She is the widow of a revenue officer, who has been gathered to his fathers twenty years or more, though his musket, cutlass, and heavy horse pistols still hang in their accustomed nook over the fire-place. Never have I seen a house of such thorough cleanliness. Every article of furniture that will bear a polish shines like a mirror, and the joists of the ceiling are as white as her kerchief and apron. What can one say more? "What are they made of?" you ask in an aside. "Bone," I answer. "Does she have them washed, then?" you inquire within.

"Washed! did you say," responds the old lady; for her ears are quick, and she has overheard your whisper. "Washed, my son! of course I have; they are washed with soap and water, and then well scrubbed with a brush three or four times a-year. But you seem fond of curious old things, my son, and I have many which I love to show. Come, look at my locked-up corner cupboards." And Dame Martin rises and leads the way, with head thrown back and step as firm as ever.

"She's taken with you, kind friend," I say; "for this is esteemed a great favour. But let us follow."

Out of one room we go, and into another, and many curiosities greet our wondering perceptions. Here, a hoard of old china which would be priceless in the eyes of many—one tea-service in particular of the most delicately transparent fabric. There, in a second closet, a number of massive silver and gilt cups and candelabra, antique inlaid fire-arms, and quaintly embossed salvers. Here, again, a piece of rich silk wondrously embroidered;

* Large iron buckets.

there, a silver speaking-trumpet. You look at me with eyebrows raised, as each valuable is brought to light. Ah! the same thought flashes through our minds. Human nature! human nature is weak! and we cannot help the suspicion that her departed lord must have come by them from an occasional inability to see and detect the smugglers in their lawless trade; such things used to be, we know, and these have been hoarded here for many a long day.

And now, our inspection over, we return to the comfortable parlour; sweet, delicious cider and wedge-like slices of saffron-cake await us. You *must* eat and drink, friend, however sparingly, or you will mortally offend our venerable hostess. The knitting is put aside, the apron smoothed, the hands crossed in her lap, and Dame Martin has settled herself for a *tell*. Gradually from talkers we two become attentive listeners, as the dame pours forth anecdote upon anecdote, tale upon tale, of bygone times, though almost all connected with the neighbourhood in which she lives; for in the village two miles off was she born, and not an hour of her eighty years has seen her outside her own loved county.

She tells us of daring feats of flood and tide, performed by brave unlettered men, whose mortal remains have long been mingled with their parent dust—speaking of each by name, as if they were still strong in the flesh, though they perished, dear reader, perhaps ere you and I had seen the light of day.

Now she speaks of the d'arth in the land, down to Polperro, when the pilchar's failed o' coming; and how the great seine^o hung ready for weeks an' weeks, and never a fish was seen, and weary eyes were watching, day after day, for the gulls to gather together out on the wide sea, and thus proclaim the coming shoal: how whole families were starving, starving for lack of those little fish which were all in all to them—their food, their labour, their only means of subsistence: how, when all hope failed, God sent them, like to the Israelites of old, meat indeed, in the shape of vast shoals, and how the *take* was the greatest ever known, and joy and plenty were with them; and rude songs of thanksgiving went up to heaven, from hearts lately filled with gloomy despair, but now o'erflowing with joy and gladness.

Again she pours forth heart-stirring tales of the old French war, and of bloody fights out on the vast deep: how her two brothers died the death of the brave, and her old father mourned their loss, and yet parted with his third boy for his country's sake: how he returned in the year 1800, alive and well, though he left a limb behind him: and many another interesting draft she draws from the funded capital of her memory. And anon the talk veers round to herself, her many joys and few troubles, and the tear rolls down her furrowed cheek as she conjures up the manly figure of her own good man who has gone before her. How she dwells on his handsome face and weather-beaten form, his daring, and his many scars, and his hairbreadth escapes! But time slips by, and we must be going; besides, "I fear we must be tiring you, kind dame."

"Not a whit, my sons! not a whit! The day's young, and ye must wait till I tell ye one more yarn about what 'fell my John on the shore there beyond, down to Smuggler's Cove—if ye'll only bide so long as 'twill take me for to do."

What can we do but give in? Good manners forbid our decamping, at least for a few more minutes, and down we sit again in our hard and slippery, though comfortable chairs, whilst the aged dame proceeds in her relation concerning the departed Martin.

* Net.

Varieties.

WASHINGTON.—Two features predominate in the character of Washington: a profound attachment to the cause he had adopted, and a firm independence of judgment and conduct in the service of his country. He was a genuine Anglo-American planter, strongly imbued with English traditions and American manners, sympathizing perfectly with the general sentiment and desire of his fellow-countrymen, but whose mind, imperturbably sound, rejected all public passions, prejudices, and caprices, judging them with equal freedom and calmness whenever they presented themselves before him, never quarrelling with them abruptly, but ever resolved to resist when they compromised the policy which, in his strong conviction, the public interest called on him to maintain. While possessing the instinct and natural gift of authority, he was eminently prudent and scrupulous in the exercise of government; full of respect for men in general, and for the common rights of all, but without any democratic bias, and dignified in manner, on all occasions, almost to severity. An admirable compound of lofty intelligence and tempered judgment, as of pride without ambition, which commanded at the same time respect and confidence, and raised him to the undisputed leadership of a people who saw in him their most disinterested, their safest, ablest, and worthiest servant.—*Guizot*.

THE RISE OF THE ROTHSCHILDS.—When George III came to the throne there was a little boy at Frankfort who did not dream of ever having anything to do, personally, with the sovereigns of Europe. He was in the first stages of training for the Jewish priesthood. His name was Meyer Anselm Rothschild. For some reason or other he was placed in a counting-house at Hanover, and he soon discovered what he was fit for. He began humbly as an exchange-broker, and went on to be the banker of the Landgrave of Hesse, whose private fortune he saved by his shrewdness, when Napoleon overran Germany. How he left a large fortune and a commercial character of the highest order, and how his five sons settled in five of the great cities of Europe, and have had more authority over war and peace, and the destinies of nations, than the sovereigns themselves, the world pretty well knows. Despot monarchs must be dependent on money-lenders, unless they are free from debt, and can command unlimited revenues for untold purposes—which is never true of despotic sovereigns. Constitutional rulers are free from the responsibility and the difficulty, and our sovereigns are supplied by parliamentary vote, and need not stoop to borrow. Yet there is room for a Rothschild in London, where loans are negotiated for all countries, and which is a kind of central office for the financial news of the world.

CEYLON.—A series of statistical tables published in Ceylon shows the progress of the colony in the twenty years since 1839. The population has increased by 31½ per cent.—from 1,360,260 to 1,786,038. Of these, 2865 are male and 2469 female Europeans in civil life, 1444 male and 207 female Europeans in military life. The number of native troops is 2199. The revenue has risen from £372,013 to £747,036, the expenditure from £383,592 to £698,268. The value of the trade has increased five-fold. The coffee exported in 1839 was valued at £126,385, in 1859 at £1,467,496. The rice imported, chiefly from India, in 1839 was valued at £182,300, in 1859 at £702,353. The value of cotton goods imports in 1839 was £128,607, in 1859 £630,936. In the seventeen years up to 1861, the acreage sold in fee simple was 163,414, which realized £260,772, and also £34,089 as survey fees. The total acreage sold since 1833 is 430,787. This is what fee simple, an open Legislative Council, and self-government, have done for a tropical colony not larger than some Indian Zillahs.—*Cotton Supply Reporter*.

TIME AND ETERNITY.—A Christian traveller tells us, that he saw the following admonition printed on a folio sheet in an inn in Savoy. "Understand well the force of the words—a God, a moment, an eternity; a God who sees you, a moment which flies from you, an eternity which awaits you: a God whom you serve so ill; a moment of which you so little profit; an eternity which you hazard so rashly."

READY FOR THE LAST JOURNEY.—Mr. Philip Henry said to some of his neighbours, who came to see him on his death-bed: "Oh, make sure work for your souls, by getting an interest in Christ while you are in health. If I had that work to do now, what would become of me? I bless God I am satisfied. See to it all of you, that your work be not undone when your time is done, lest you be undone for ever."